



The South India CHURCHMAN

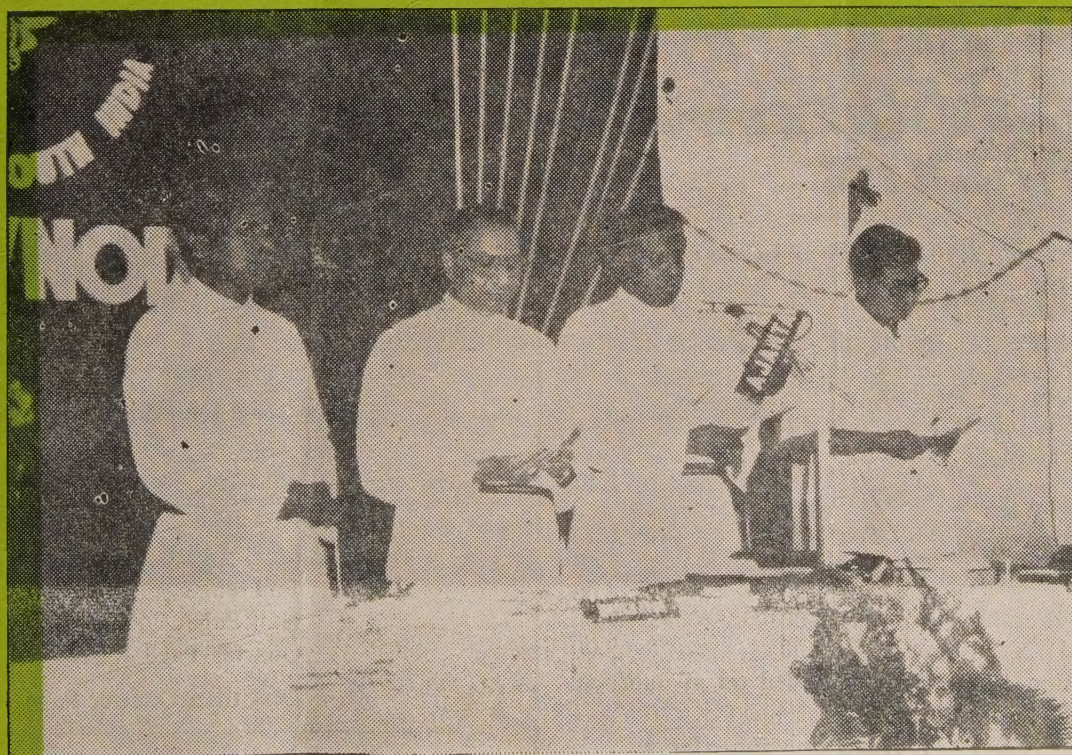
The Magazine of the Church of South India

FEBRUARY - MARCH 1986

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From Left: Revd. M. Azariah—General Secretary, Most Revd. I. Jesudason—Moderator, Rt. Revd. Dr. P. Victor Premasagar—Deputy Moderator, Mr. K. J. Victor David—Treasurer.

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Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.

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FEBRUARY - MARCH 1986

EDITOR

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1-2-288/31 DUMALGUDA, HYDERABAD-29 (A.P.)

Articles, reports should be sent to the

Editor by the 5th of every month

*

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All remittances and communications and subscriptions, advertisements, change of address should be sent to the Hon. Business Manager

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The Revd. Abraham D. Purshothaman, Presbyter,
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64 Magnolia Avenue, Jersey City,
NEW JERSEY 07306, U.S.A. Tel. 201. 798-2888

Subscription in India Rs. 12.00

Single Copy Rs. 1.50

Overseas Subscriptions :

	Sea Mail	Air Mail
U. S. A. ..	\$ 4.00	\$ 9.00
U. K. ..	£ 1.50	£ 4.00
Australia ..	\$ 4.00	\$ 9.00
New Zealand ..	\$ 4.00	\$ 9.00

(Bank commission of Rs. 2 to be added on all mofussil cheques)

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25 Years Ago!

Other Sub-Christian customs—whose number is legion—that have come into vogue amongst Christians in regard to the dead, are (i) making Memorial Services take place at the usual Weekly Sunday Worship of the congregation thus distracting the attention from God and His church away to a man, however, worthy though he may be; and (ii) the use of such words as 'sad', 'sorrowful', 'inconsolable', and 'heart-broken' in regard to bereavement.

The death, especially the sudden and premature passing away of friends, ought also to remind us how pointless are all our worldly ambition, all our feverish struggles, all our conflict one with another, because right in the midst of all this turmoil the call may come to us, prepared as we are, and we have to go as we came—nothing in our hands. The only reality that abides is the love of God.

—from the Editorial *The Churchman*

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The 20th Synod

The Twentieth Synod meeting held at LMS Compound, Trivandrum, the South Kerala diocese, marks yet another milestone in the history of the Church of South India. The organisers could not have chosen a more idyllic venue than the LMS compound with its lush coconut groves and charming crotons.

The 300 delegates, the several overseas participants, perhaps the largest contingent ever represented, the retired bishops and the youth participants made the meeting a memorable one.

Rev. M. Azariah, the General Secretary presented a carefully prepared and a well-covered Report which reflected the activities of the church. Moderator Jesudason's address to the Synod, in many ways, was a soul-searching one. It demands immediate response.

The revised liturgy prepared under the Chairmanship of Bishop Sundar Clarke was well received. Plans are being made to produce tapes of this revised liturgy in all the four major languages of the South.

STOP PRESS

It is with deep sense of sorrow we announce that the Rt. Rev. A. M. HOLLIS a former Bishop of Madras and the first Moderator of the Church of South India had passed away into glory on February 11, 1986 at the age of 86 in the United Kingdom. Bishop Newbigin refers to Bishop Hollis saying, 'he was a very great man and if it had not been for him there would be no CSI'. Indeed, every member of the Church in India can share in praising God for the life of this great Ecumenist and humanist in Bishop Arthur Michael Hollis.

emphasised on the vital role of the native Indian arts and culture in the missionary work. Elaborating he recalled some points of the illuminating article by Bishop Victor Premasagar which appeared in the December issue of the Churchman. Dr. Gnana Robinson presented a challenging paper on the role of the churches in, 'Siding with the poor'. Bishop Sam Ponniah's paper on 'Evangelistic Proclamation' evinced keen interest. Incidentally, as the Vellore diocese was celebrating its Decennium, there was a chance for the House to discuss and know more about the phenomenal growth of the diocese under the able leadership of Bishop Sam Ponniah.

together shouldered the onerous responsibility of making the large gathering a success deserve praise.

The Moderator, with his characteristic finesse initiated discussions, controlled the proceedings and brightened up the sessions with his wit and wisdom.

All the delegates and all the participants took stock of the two years work and prayerfully resolved to go ahead confidently under the Lord's guidance with the various programmes and projects—in Christ's way.

—DASS BABU

The Pope and The Archbishop



In India International Year of Peace has ushered in by the visit of the two great church heads—the Pope and the Archbishop. Their pastoral visit has been lauded and appreciated by all sections.

On 7th March 1980, Cardinal Picachy, the then President of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of India (CBCI) sent a letter to the Holy Father inviting him to India. Late Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, during her visit to Rome, gave an oral invitation to the Holy Father and this was accepted in principle. Later, Archbishop Simon Pimenta of Bombay (President of CBCI) invited the Holy Father who said on this occasion that he would like to and would be happy to visit India. When His Excellency Giani Zail Singh, the President of India, invited him, the Pope gladly accepted the invitation.

There are approximately 800,000,000 Roman Catholics in the world, forming about 18 per cent of the world's population. The American continent has the largest percentage—63, with Europe 42, Australia and New Zealand 25, Africa 13 and Asia 2.5 (if the Philippines share is subtracted, it is less than one).

India has about 10 million Catholics, divided into three liturgical rites—the Syro-Malabar, the Syro-Malankara and the Latin, the dominant rite of the West, brought in by the Portuguese in 1498 after Vasco da Gama landed in Calicut. Their ecclesiastical jurisdiction is spread over 18 Sees, the See being the official seat of a bishop.

The Roman Church has about 1.6 million people employed in religious work, of which 400,000 are priests and 950,000 nuns. The world-wide jurisdiction of the Church is exercised through some 2,400 ecclesiastical territories. There are 340,000 pastoral Churches at the grassroots, grouped under the authority of bishops. The bishop is appointed solely by the Pope and reports to him directly (There are many Churches in the Christian world in which bishops are elected, but it is not so in the Roman Church). Bishops have to report at least once in five years to the Pope; they are the direct link between the Pope and his flock, though within the hierarchy, archbishops and patriarchs hold more elevated ranks.

Pope Comforts Sick at Teresa Home

It was an aesthetic welcome that the metropolis which Mother Teresa made her home gave Pope John Paul II when he arrived here from Ranchi on a two-day visit to the capital of West Bengal where Christianity came over three centuries ago.

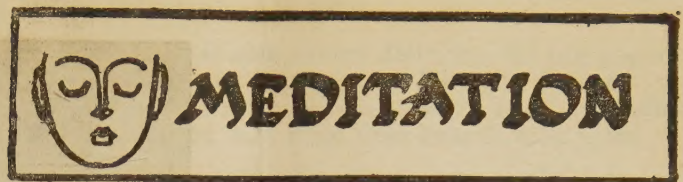
The chief minister of the state ruled by the communist party of India (Marxist) Mr. Jyoti Basu greeted the Pope on arrival with a bouquet of flowers. The Archbishop of Calcutta Cardinal Lawrence Picachy was present to receive the Pope. Hundreds of colourfully dressed school children lined up the airport waving the Vatican and Indian flags chanting in unison 'Welcome Father' and sprinkling flower petals on the VIP enclosure. Two orphans garlanded the Pope as he reached the enclosure. His first stop in the city was at Nirmal Hriday, the home for the destitute run by the Missionaries of Charity.

She then introduced the Sisters, friends and benefactors and Mr. Ajit Kumar Mukherjee, a priest of the Kali temple adjacent to the Nirmal Hriday. Mother Teresa garlanded the Pope and Pope reciprocated the gesture by garlanding the Mother. The priest of the temple garlanded the Pope.

Mother Teresa led the 66 year-old Pope to the home where 42 destitutes anxiously awaited him. The Pope met each one of them and blessed them. The inmates overwhelmed with joy kissed his hands. Later the Pope served them a meal of puris, cutlets, potato curry and sweet curd.

Mother Teresa then guided him to the podium where he addressed the inmates of the home. He said, he was happy to begin his visit to Calcutta from Nirmal Hriday, a home that witnesses the primacy of love. Lauding the mercy works of the Missionaries of Charity, he said, this home that shelters the abandoned and unloved, is a place of hope; a place where love reigns. This is a home built with love, he added.

In the words of Jesus, whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do to me, the Pope said in reference to the humble and great services of the Sisters. He concluded the address with a prayer interspersed with sentences in Bengali.



REV. ROBINS

'And, not to mention other things, every day I am under the pressure of my concern for all the churches when someone is weak, then I feel weak too; when someone falls into sin, I am filled with distress.'

Text. 2 Cor. 11: 28, 29 (TEV)

St. Paul, after the long narration about his sufferings for the sake of the Gospel, says that in spite of all his tribulations, every day he is under the pressure of his concern for all the churches (RSV). He is anxious about the *people*. He preached the Gospel and planted churches in many places, had to face oppositions and to go through all kinds of sufferings. At the same time the young church was threatened by the enemies of the gospel. There were divisions and false teachings. Paul was much concerned. His letters bear ample evidence to the inner struggles and pains of his concern for the churches. He mentions names of his personal friends about whom he was concerned. He was aware of the problems and weaknesses of those churches he ministered to.

God expects his servants to have this very same concern and anxiety for the people. This is clearly expressed when God gives instructions to Moses regarding the holy garments the High priest should wear. (Exo. chapters 28 and 39.) The High priest had to wear an outer garment called the Ephod whenever he entered the holy place. He was instructed to fasten two *shoulder straps* on either side of the Ephod with two precious stones in them. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were to be engraved on the stones. This was 'to represent the twelve tribes of Israel, in this way Aaron will carry their names on his shoulders, so that I, the Lord, will always remember my people'.

I don't think God can forget His people. But then, why did he tell the High priest to wear straps as a reminder? It may be that, when the High priest puts on his holy garments and when on his pomp and glory enters the holy place, away from the people, he might forget those whom he represents and for whom he is standing in the presence of God. When he is alone with God, he should not be away from his people. He should bear them on his shoulders.

Another symbolic ornament he had to wear was a *Breast piece* which had on it twelve precious stones arranged in four rows of three. Again the names of the twelve tribes engraved on them. Symbolically speaking he is bearing his people in his heart. In fact one version of the Bible uses the word '*heart*'. The High priest cannot forget his people. The people shall have a place in his heart. What Paul expresses in his experience is symbolically expressed centuries before Christ.

Let me quote one more instance again from the book of Exo. 32: 32. You might remember the terrible sin committed by the people of Israel when they worshipped the golden calf in the place of the Lord. God was so angry with the people that He wanted to punish them. Moses

too was angry. His men killed about 3000 of them by sword. But when God wanted to destroy them Moses goes to the presence of God and intercedes. He persists with God and pleads on their behalf. Finally he prays 'please forgive their sin; but if you won't then remove my name from the book in which you have written the names of your people'. Moses did not want any special treatment from God apart from the people. He would rather be destroyed along with his sinful people even when he was not at fault.

We are here at the Synod on behalf of various dioceses, churches and institutions. We represent a great church or a group of people and may have many concerns during the sessions. Those concerns may be relevant and necessary for the growth of the church. We may even be concerned about ourselves and our own future in the church. But apart from all these, are we concerned about the people whom we represent? God said to Moses that the High priest should remember his people when he stands in the holy place.

We may very well say that we are not High priests and we are not standing in the holy place in the O.T. sense. Of course some of us are ordained and a few are consecrated. The lay persons can say we are lay people. But the Bible says that we are a royal priesthood and we are all people of God with a priestly function. In fact some lay men are more Pastoral than most of the pastors and some lay women are more priestly than most of the priests. Our concern for our people is priestly in nature.

Then what is the meaning of this concern? Paul feels weak when someone is weak and he is in distress when someone falls into sin. When we think of our people in various parts of the church of South India we have very few things to be happy and satisfied about we may be unhappy about the slow progress among our people, the backwardness, the betrayals, the dishonesty, the litigations, casteism and communalism and the divisions (yes, some of us are here because of the divisions). When we are aware of the weaknesses of our people, how do we feel about it? Do we feel we are better than they are? When they fall into sin do we feel happy that we ourselves are not falling into sin? But Paul would feel distressed and our Lord would stand with them sharing their burden.

We represent our people and we belong to each other. Their weakness is our weakness. Their sin is our sin. Therefore as we proceed with the business of the Synod, apart from all other concerns, let us have a burden for our people. Our Lord look upon himself the sin and burden of the whole human family. When we think of mission in Christ's way, let us not forget the people because He is with the people. We will be following him and his way when we share the burdens of the people along with him.

May the Lord grant us wisdom and power to fulfil his mission in His way. Amen.



The Archbishop of Canterbury *The Most Rev. Robert Runcie*

FRANCIS S. RAJAN, *Journalist, Hyderabad*

'I come to India as a father visiting home of a married daughter'—this was how the Archbishop described his visit to India !

Accepting the invitation sent by the Moderators of the CSI and the CNI and the Metropolitan of the MarThoma Church to visit India, the Archbishop, accompanied by his wife Mrs. Rosalind and six of his associates, arrived in India on 9th of February. He visited the churches in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Vellore, Bangalore, Cochin, Kottayam, Hyderabad and Delhi.

Speaking about the purpose of his visit the Archbishop said :

I do not come in any Political or State capacity, nor do I come as ruler or spiritual head of the Indian Christian churches. Their headquarters are in India, not London. My visit is rather a sign that the Christian churches know no political, cultural or racial boundaries. We are all members of an international family. I come as a pilgrim to a country which has venerable and ancient religious traditions. I have great admiration for the other religious and communities of faith in India. My final preoccupation is to learn from the Churches in India which have overcome some of the divisions between Christians in Europe. The Church of England could gain much from their experience.

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Robert Alexander Kennedy Runcie, M.C., D.D., who was enthroned in Canterbury Cathedral as 102nd Archbishop of Canterbury on March 25th, 1980, was born in Liverpool on October 2nd, 1921. The son of a Scottish electrical engineer, Robert Dalziel Runcie, and Anne Runcie. He was the youngest of a family of four, and went to Coro-

nation Road Council School, Liverpool. He remembers his father as a keen racing man—'a very lovable human being who had a profound distrust of both parsons and policeman.'

His father went blind when Robert was fifteen. He retired and the family had to move to a smaller house. Robert went to Merchant Taylors', in Crosby, Lancashire, where he proved to be good at games and became Captain of Cricket. He won a scholarship to Braesnose College, Oxford. He had completed only his first year there when, with the Second World War on, he joined the Scots Guards. At Sandhurst he was trained for the Guards Armoured Division. He became a tank officer in the Scots Guards, went to Normandy and moved with the Guards to the Baltic. Robert Runcie was awarded the Military Cross in 1945 for 'courageous leadership' under 'shell and mortar fire', in the words of the official citation.

When the war in Europe ended, Robert Runcie volunteered for the paratroops in Japan, but VJ Day intervened and instead he went to Trieste where he was personal assistant to the British Representative on the Italy/Yugoslavia Boundary Commission, which was briefed to draw the line between Italy, Yugoslavia and Austria before the Paris Peace Conference.

After the war he returned to Oxford to read history ; graduating in 1948, he went on to Westcott House to study theology.

'Only in my final term at Oxford did I decide to train for ordination but it was something that had occurred to me from time to time in previous years. After Westcott I went to Gosforth, Newcastle (All Saints' Church).'

'I was called back to Westcott House to teach others. I then moved to Trinity Hall in 1956 to be the Dean. I taught Classics and Church History. It was here in Cambridge that I met and married Rosalind Turner, daughter of the Senior Fellow of Trinity Hall. At that time Rosalind was a music student picking up a little extra cash as a secretary.'

He married Rosalind Turner on September 5th, 1957 at the church of St. Mary the Great, Cambridge. She is now a distinguished pianist who has raised £ 225,000 for charity from her concerts and piano recitals. They have two children—a son of 25, James, now working with the BBC in radio drama, and a daughter, Rebecca, now 22, and a member of the staff of the Royal Commonwealth Society.

During the 50's Robert Runcie was Secretary to the Cambridge Mission in Delhi. This meant recruiting candidates for teaching jobs in India. Later he returned to India as Teape Lecturer and travelled through the continent in the autumn of 1962.

'In 1961 I was persuaded to go to be Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College near Oxford. I was glad that I was not only the Principal but the Vicar of the parish—an old-fashioned rural parish not far from the industrial end of Oxford. The parishoners were the families of farmers, motor mechanics and commuting academics. It was still very much a village pattern where the Vicar was Chairman of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee, and the Sports Club and even the President of the local angling association. It gave me a marvellous insight into rural communities and their loyalties. I probably learned as much from that as from my students whom I was trying to train to be clergy.'

In 1970 Robert Runcie was consecrated Bishop of St. Albans in the south of England. There he found a mixture of everything, city and town life mixed in with rural communities. There were new developments in training for the ministry. He was keen to translate college theories into communities capable of receiving them. His priorities were the educating and training of the people of the diocese in their faith and in appropriate forms of Christian service for the day.

He also undertook work for the Anglican Church in its relationship with the Orthodox—and as a result travelled extensively in Eastern Europe.

In March 1980, Robert Runcie was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury in a splendid and traditional ceremony at Canterbury Cathedral attended by all the primates of the Anglican Communion Overseas as well as by Roman Catholic Cardinals, Orthodox Patriarchs, leaders from the Free Churches, and representatives from the Jewish, Buddhist, Moslem, Hindu and Sikh communities in Britain.

Since that date Archbishop Runcie has been constantly in the centre of the international scene. Certainly two pictures of him have been transmitted all over the world. One is from July 29th 1981 when he married the Prince and Princess of Wales at a fairytale ceremony in St. Paul's Cathedral. The second is from Canterbury, when he welcomed Pope John Paul II to Canterbury Cathedral on 28th May, 1982.

Dr. Runcie has undertaken more international commitments than any previous Archbishop of Canterbury. He looks forward to the Lambeth Conference of 1988 and sees it as a meeting of great significance. He has set himself the goal of visiting as many parts of the Anglican

Communion as he possibly can before its representatives gather in Canterbury in 1988.

In 1980 Dr. Runcie visited Zaire, for the inauguration of the Anglican Province of Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire. On the same visit he went on to Ghana, where his first meeting with Pope John Paul II took place.

In November 1984 Dr. Runcie became the first Archbishop of Canterbury to speak in the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris. He addressed the congregation there during a week's visit to France at the invitation of the President of the French Episcopal Conference.

On the ecumenical front, the second Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission has been set up to examine the remaining doctrinal differences which separate Anglicans and Roman Catholics. It includes an Australian member from each church. The next step will be in 1988 when the Lambeth Conference of Bishops will consolidate Anglican responses from all over the world.

Dr. Runcie has never lost his enthusiasm for contact with young people who are seeking after or questioning the faith he represents. He is a frequent preacher in universities and colleges and a familiar figure meeting and being questioned by pilgrim groups at Canterbury.

He likes to think of himself as, in essence, the parish priest or the diocesan Bishop that he is able to be, on many days of the year, at Canterbury. It is in this cathedral town in Kent that Dr. Runcie is to be found at the weekend, carrying out the regular duties of a bishop, working with the parish clergy and preaching in even the tiniest country churches.

It is the warmth of these local contacts which sustain Robert Runcie and which prevent him from being cut off from ordinary Church goers by the formidable workload and the many official duties which come with the office of Archbishop of Canterbury.

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LENT 1986

RT. REV. DR. SUNDAR CLARKE, *Madras*

We are once again at the season of Lent. From Ash Wednesday the 12th of February we will be turning our thoughts, attention much to the Cross. Not to say that we have not been preoccupied with the Cross but this will be a season to give special attention to the Cross and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Renunciation

The word Lent really means 'Spring' and a lot of things spring forth from the Cross. Perhaps it originally had some link with the lengthening of days and the coming alive of nature signifying the coming alive of our faith. I would like to focus our attention on the word 'Spring'.

The Cross is a reminder that something must spring from our faith. It should be firstly a season for a springing forth of renunciation. Renunciation not as an end in itself but more as a means to an end. Renunciation has more intrinsic value than instrumental value. In the early church it was a period of fasting and still continues to be. During the first three centuries there was a period of fasting (2 or 3 days) before Easter. This was later fixed to forty days of preparation for Easter. It should have some Old Testament references to forty days because it is connected with the fast of Moses, with the fast of Elijah and with the fast of our Lord Himself. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and goes on till Holy Saturday. In the Eastern Churches the Lenten fast was for seven weeks (except Saturdays and Sundays). In the Western Churches the Lenten fast was for six weeks (except on Sundays). Though in the East, we seem to have taken on the Western concept of Lent. Whatever be the type of fast, whether it be giving up of food for a day or for a meal in a week or giving up some of our strong like, the discipline of renunciation is necessary during Lent. Let us be involved in true renunciation this Lent.

Repentance

As already mentioned the act of renunciation should lend us to something deeper, something more substantial. The Prophet Joel puts it so aptly which is normally a part of the Old Testament lesson. For Ash Wednesday Joel 2 : 13 'And rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repents of evil'. Rending of our hearts and garments or renunciation is to lead us further to return to the Lord our God. We can fast to death but if there is no repentance, all our fasting and renunciation is in vain. This should be a season for heart searching, for heart rending and for repentance. Bishop Newbigin in his Bible Study at the Synod brought out the concept of repentance in terms of a 'U' turn. The traditional Metanoia was an about turn but a more contemporary word is a 'U' turn. There must be a definite time, stage of turning around and coming back to a fresh start. Lent should be a season of repentance. Let us tear our hearts not with emotional

feelings at the sight of the Cross but in a true act of coming back to God. Get back to God.

Reconciliation

Lent should also be a time of reconciliation. This is the International Year of Peace. Peace is not just an inward state of the mind or the spirit but it also leads to an act of reconciliation. Peace within should also be peace without, getting reconciled to God and reconciled to our neighbours. The full significance of the Cross cannot be realised without reconciliation. If we have anything against a brother, if there are lingering uncharitable thoughts, if there are attitudes without love, let us pray for healing and reconciliation. The Cross is the central act of healing and reconciliation and we Christians are members of the reconciling community and we need to be reconciled to Jesus Christ and reconciled with others. May we remember Matthew 5 : 23-24 :

'So if you are offering your gifts at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go ; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.'

This Lent, before we come to the Cross of Jesus Christ, if we remember that our brother has something against us or we have something against our brother, let us let loose the gift or the treasures we hold for God on the offerings we have for the Cross and first be reconciled with our brother and then come to the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Renewal

The Cross is the point where salvation happened, is happening and causes happening. It is the spring board of our salvation. From the Cross springs renewal, from the Cross there is regeneration, there is salvation, there is health. To a desperate humanity in desolation the Cross because it was emptied offered newness, hope and a triumph over tragedy. After Good Friday and Easter the Cross stands for life, newness, renewal, hope and the accomplishment in the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

So we find that this Lent we have a freshness, newness to our faith spring board for redemption. This Lent from the Cross of Jesus should spring an utter helplessness and renunciation. A lot in us, of us and for us needs to be stripped. May there spring a stippedness in our spirituality. May there also spring an effort for a 'U' turn, an effort to get back to God, not as we were but as we should be. This Lent may there also spring new healing, new peace, new relationships, new reconciliation. Finally let this be a season of hope, renewal and rejuvenation. May we begin moving towards a closer relationship with God, a relationship more meaningful and more full of joy, peace and love, Let Lent 1986 be a season of renewal.

TEMPTATION

THE MOST REV. DR. RUNCIE

Archbishop of Canterbury

'Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And He fasted forty days and forty nights ...'

(Matt. 4 : 1-11)

Lent is the time when, mindful of our Lord's trials and tribulations in the wilderness, we look to our own lives. We know that, like Christ, we are 'assaulted by many temptations'. But, unlike Christ, our resistance is so often overcome. Even when our spirit is willing, we find our flesh is weak.

'Then the devil took him up to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world: "All these I will give you, if you fall down and worship me".'

Jesus' temptations are our temptations. He has shared our life and walked our way before us. Here, in this the final of Jesus' trial, is the temptation which lies at the heart of all our sin.

This is the desire to substitute for God some other object of worship and devotion. Here is the temptation to worship false gods. To persuade us to bow down to him is the essence of the devil's strategy.

The devil is a master of disguise, and our false gods come in many different shapes. But in their displacing God from our hearts they are the same. We can make gods of other people—people we love and admire. So we hear ourselves saying, 'I adore her', or 'I worship the ground he walks on'.

Others make power and fame, ambition and success, their god. To the service of these gods all a man's energies and talents are committed, as he pushes his way to the top. Self-seeking power and glory are gods worshipped as readily by institutions as by individuals. And in some places it is the State itself which is idolised: before the State, its founders and leaders, the people fall down and pay homage.

You cannot help giving away the name of the god you worship. This is because the dominant influence on your life, whatever it is, is going to leave a mark on you. This is true, not only of our behaviour, but also of our very faces. We have all registered the serene beauty of the faces of those who have devoted themselves to the worship of God. We have all also noticed the strained and avid faces of those who really worship ambition or power, whatever religious allegiance they may profess. The truth is that, after the age of forty, we are in large measure responsible for our faces.

This sermon was preached on the Sunday, 16th Feb. '86 in the United Service held at the St. George's Cathedral Madras.

'The devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world "All these I will give you, if you fall down and worship me". Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve".'

'And He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward He was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread". But He answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone".'

Here is perhaps the greatest temptation which confronts us in the West: the temptation to worship the golden calf of things, possessions, riches. In the western world especially, our talents and energies are channelled into the business of accumulating material things—things to make us more comfortable, things to make us more attractive, things to make us superior. Materialism is the name of our religion, Mammon is god, and advertisers our priests.

We have come to dedicate our lives and loyalties not to the Creator, but only to the things He has created. And so the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, dividing neighbours and nations, and producing the explosive envy, frustration and violence we've seen in some of our cities in England. 'Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth, said Jesus. For where your wealth is, there will your heart be also'.

That's not to say, of course, that Christians should be careless for the world's goods. There are many things we need if we're to live lives which are fruitful and fulfilled. These are basic human rights, and the Christian Church must be deeply and actively concerned for those who suffer hunger and disease, imprisonment and homelessness.

Man needs bread and much else to live, but the Christian knows that he cannot live on these things *alone*, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

'Then the devil set him on the pinnacle of the Temple, and said to him, "If you are the son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, He will give his angels charge of you".'

Here is our temptation to put God to the test, to demand more of God than we have a right to. Here I am thinking especially of much religious experience today. I am thinking of what I call the acrobatic sects, those strident, fanatical cults of unreason which turn prayer into magic, belief into slogans, faith into proof, and do so much to damage Christianity's reputation among the Community of faiths. God is expected to perform: He is expected to dispense instant healing, lasting joy, immediate converts; signs and wonders of every kind.

That's not to deny that God is capable of all these things, and more besides. But it is not for us to demand these wonders just how and when we want them. To root our Christian faith in these things is to build on sand. We build on rock when we have learned to place our trust in God; when we have learned to be still, to listen and to wait, patiently and expectantly, and to do so even when life is hard and unrewarding.

Here, Christians have much to learn from those of other faiths for whom meditation and contemplation, silence and serenity, are natural and essential to their spirituality.

I have been moved and inspired by these profound words scratched by a young Jewish boy on the wall of a ghetto :

'I believe in the sun, even if it does not shine ;
I believe in love, even if I do not feel it ;
I believe in God, even if I do not see him.'

In his great spiritual classic, *The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas à Kempis says this :

'Jesus has in these days many people who love his heavenly kingdom, but few who bear his cross. He has many who desire comfort, but few who are ready for trials. He has found many to share his table, but few to share his fast. Everyone longs to rejoice with him, but few are ready to suffer for him. Many people follow Jesus as far as the breaking of the bread, but few go so far as to drink the cup of his passion. Many glory in his miracles, few follow him in the shame of the cross.'

We are called as Christians to take up our cross and to share the sufferings and temptations of our Lord. There are times when we have no choice but to follow where He has gone before. This service of the Holy Eucharist reminds us of this, as we come to share in Christ's body broken and blood shed for us.

But we share too in Christ's victory : we commemorate in this service his holy and life-giving sacrifice. The message of Lent is that Jesus Christ is 'mighty to save'. In his temptations in the wilderness He has shown us *how* to overcome our own temptations. In his cross on Calvary for which Lent prepares us, Jesus gives us his gracious power and strength to live a life like his. Christ, mighty to save : 'that's what I hope you will think of in the rest of these forty days.

'No temptation, says St. Paul, has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape.' Amen.

WANTED

1. DIRECTOR for the Synod Ecumenical Relations Department.

Qualifications : Should be an ordained person with at least 5 years of experience as Presbyter, Graduate in Theology, preferably with Doctoral degree. Experience of Overseas study and travel essential.

Term of appointment : Three year term, renewable.

2. DIRECTOR for the Synod Comprehensive Rural Development Education Programme.

Term of appointment : One year only.

Qualifications : CSI committed Christian with 5 years of experience in Community Rural Development Programmes or Presbyter with 5 years involvement with Rural Development Ministry.

Please apply giving full details to the General Secretary-CSI Synod, 222, Cathedral Road, P. B. 4906, Madras, 600 086, before 15th March 1986, duly recommended by your Bishop.

THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF INDIA

We need persons deeply committed to Bible Cause for the post of Distribution Officer in Auxiliaries at Delhi and Allahabad.

The applicant should be a graduate with 5 years experience involving Marketing/Sales/Public Relations/Distribution of Scriptures between 30 and 40 years of age, fluent in the regional language and in English. Those with Theological education and experience in publishing/distributing Christian literature and Postgraduates will be given preference. Pay Scale of Rs. 800-30-1250-40-1650 plus other allowances. Eligible for return first class train fare by the shortest route plus 10% for attending interview.

For application form and other details apply to the General Secretary, The Bible Society of India, 20, M. G. Road, Bangalore-560 001, with a self-addressed stamped (70 paise) long envelope before 15-3-1986. The last date for receipt of application is 10-4-1986.

Liberation and Transformation

MOST REV. I. JESUDASON, *Moderator*



Every year on Easter Sunday we specially celebrate the historic event of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the culmination of His earthly ministry. 'Liberation' and 'Transformation' are the two divine processes that are set in motion as a result of this historic event.

Christ's ministry was a ministry of liberating people from the power of evil. By the power of God he exposed and challenged evil designs manifested in personal, interpersonal and social levels of society. To those who came to him with repentance and faith he freely offered God's forgiveness and new life. So wickedness in all its forms agitated against Him and made the last attempt to destroy his life of goodness and crucified Him on the cross. But the story did not end there. Jesus Christ won the final victory and rose again from the dead defeating the power of evil. The Risen Saviour proclaims liberation to all those who labour under sin and death. His victory and conquest are made available to those who come to Him. His divine life that poured out in love for humanity on the cross now enters into the world with its liberating power and its free men and women from the dark forces of sin and death. This is the basic Christian experience which is testified in the life of believers down through the centuries.

The Risen Lord not only liberates but also transforms our animal nature into divine nature of goodness, love and purity. He transforms us into his own likeness. St. Paul, the Apostle says, 'We all, beholding the glory of the Lord are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord who is the glory to another, for this comes

from the Lord who is the spirit.' The resurrection of Jesus Christ lifts our earthly life to higher and richer dimensions of existence. That is why it stated in the Bible that to all who received Christ, He gave power to become children of God. Jesus Christ is not just an example for us to follow but by His resurrection from the death He is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith. His disciples are commissioned to be living witnesses of this transforming movement, challenging every sinful and correcting order until the Kingdom of God is fully and finally established on earth.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ also opens the gate to another depth in human life. We find ourselves in this world so mysteriously and inextricably united with a material frame. There is a deep and wonderful mystery into that unscrutable interaction of soul and body, which may some times startle or bewilder or distress us. The resurrection of Christ hints at the hope of the body and the opportunity of the soul. It means that the body also is accessible to the Divine Life and that the resurrection of Jesus Christ makes known the transforming power that could bring human life including the body to the state, for which the love of God had fashioned and prepared it. It is written in the New Testament, 'by God's mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead'.

Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation the old has passed away beyond, the new has come.

May the Risen Lord bestow on all readers His richness of His new life and power to overcome the world.



Moderator's Address to the 20th Session of the Synod of the CSI

MOST REV. I. JESUDASON

Since the meeting of the last Synod in Secunderabad, in January 1984, our Nation has passed through several unprecedented upheavals which caught the attention of the whole world, viz., the Blue Star Operation, assassination of Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, consequent communal violences, Bhopal disaster and Kanishka tragedy. Though it will take years for the scars created by such incidents to be fully removed, the Nation is now being brought back to peace and normalcy by the young dynamic Prime Minister, who could solve some of the long standing national problems within a short period of his assuming office. In the international scene, oppression and violence in South Africa, atrocities in Uganda, French Atom Bomb test in the Pacific, repression in Central America, Russian occupation in Afganistan, Mexican earthquake disaster, famine in Ethiopia, ethnic problem in Sri Lanka, Middle East conflicts, Star War programme of America, etc., have caused not only fear and anxiety but also posed great threat to the international relationships. One consoling silver lining of these dark clouds is the Summit meeting, held by President Reagan and the Russian General Secretary, Gorbocheve. In the context of these national and international problems, we, as part of the World Church and a member of the World Council of Churches, offer our prayers to Almighty God that 'His will be done on earth as it is in heaven' and reaffirm our pledge to continue the struggle for lasting peace.

By God's grace the Church was led to greater peace and deeper commitment during the last biennium. The dioceses which were fully or partially under Synod's administration have now assumed their own responsibility of management and are functioning reasonably well (Raya-laseema diocese, Karnataka Northern diocese, Madurai-Ramnad diocese and Kanyakumari diocese). We thank the Bishops and the Administrative Committees appointed by the Synod for their co-operation in this regard. Only through sympathetic understanding of human problems and genuine commitment to team ministry will we be able to administer the affairs of a large Church as ours and to maintain peace and harmony among its members.

Evangelism received top most priority in the Mission of the Church. The Synod Board of Mission was given a new shape with the appointment of a full time Director (Rev. C. Retnadas) who is given responsibility to co-ordinate the evangelistic activities of different dioceses and to bring to their notice possible new fields for their future evangelistic task. During the period a couple of dioceses could add thousands of believers into the Christian fold; some dioceses could form more congregations and some adopted new mission fields for evangelistic work. This Department is also expected to promote dialogue with other faiths and to train people in the use of relevant communication methods. Mrs. Manomanickam was able to return to Thailand as our missionary with the

assistance of CWM. She serves in the 'Lamp of Thailand' Scripture Correspondence Programme.

One of the major steps taken in the last biennium for strengthening the service arms of the Church was to set up two Councils with full-time Directors. They are the Synod Council for Healing Ministry with Dr. George Joseph as its Director and the Synod Board of Education with Dr. Saulam Yohan as its Director. These Councils could organise several consultations at different levels involving experts in the respective fields. We are in the process of re-defining the aims and objectives of these ministries in the context of the new situation in our country. The impact of the ministries of these councils will be felt at the diocesan level, only in the years to come. We are happy that those departments initiated during the previous biennium, viz., the Council for Technical and Vocational Training, the Pastoral Aid Department and the Communication Department have made satisfactory progress in their respective fields of work. I do not wish to dwell further on the activities of any of these Departments since you will be receiving at this meeting the detailed reports of their work.

It is worth mentioning that the Theological Commission had studied the Lima Document 'Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry' and prepared our response to that document. The Liturgy Committee has produced a new Eucharistic Liturgy incorporating a few Indian cultural elements into it and recommended it for experimental use. The Order Committee, for the first time after 38 years of its existence, has organised a consultation to evaluate its life and work in the past as well as to suggest changes that may be required to promote its ministry. The Urban Industrial and Rural Mission could conduct several seminars and has encouraged dioceses to start relevant service programmes in urban areas. The quadrennial conference of the Synod Women's Fellowship was held in 1984 in Trichy. The Youth Board organised several conferences at the diocesan level on the theme 'Peace, Development and Participation' which was given for the 'International Year of the Youth'. The Youth programmes culminated in the Synod Youth Assembly held in Madras with a public rally in October 1985.

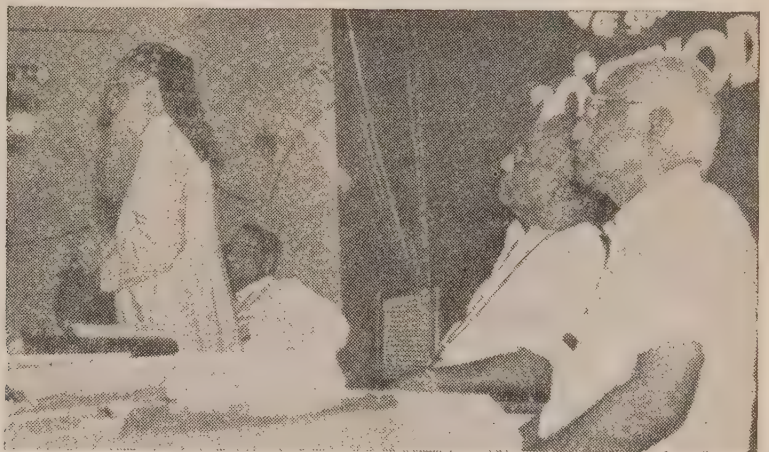
Apart from the regular religious education designed for children, a separate Lay Education Programme and Pastors' continuing Education Programme were organised under the Pastoral Aid Dept. Lay Education Programme is extended to all congregations in the form of Bible study groups, which meet regularly for prayer and Bible study. The theme chosen for the last two years was 'Christian Family and Church' and 'Mission, Ministry and Sacraments'. Study books were made available in regional languages for the use of group leaders. Under 'Pastors Continuing Education Programme' two hand

THE 20th SYNOD — PHOTO FEATURE

By
THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



His Excellency Sri Ramachandran graced the occasion



The Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church greeting the delegates



Ladies complementing the Sessions

GLIMPSES OF

Place: Trivandrum

Theme : MISSION IN CHRIST'S

' Mission in Christ's Way '
Bishop Lesslie Newbiggin delivering the theme address



Lively and fruitful group discussions



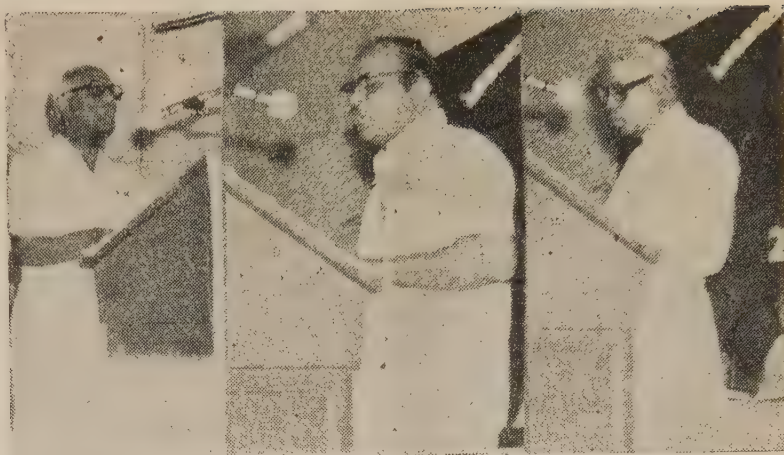
The colourful cultural show, delighting the delegates

THE SYNOD 1986

Date: 11-15, January 1986

*WILL BE DONE ON EARTH
IT IS IN HEAVEN*

*All the addresses were highly educative and inspiring
Dr. Russel Chandran, Dr. Gnana Robinson, Bishop
Sam Ponniah*



The Question hour—moments of illumination

*Mr. A. Charles, Member of Parliament (foreground)
and Prof. J. M. Stewart the conveners, who
together won the hearts of the delegates by their
lavish hospitality*

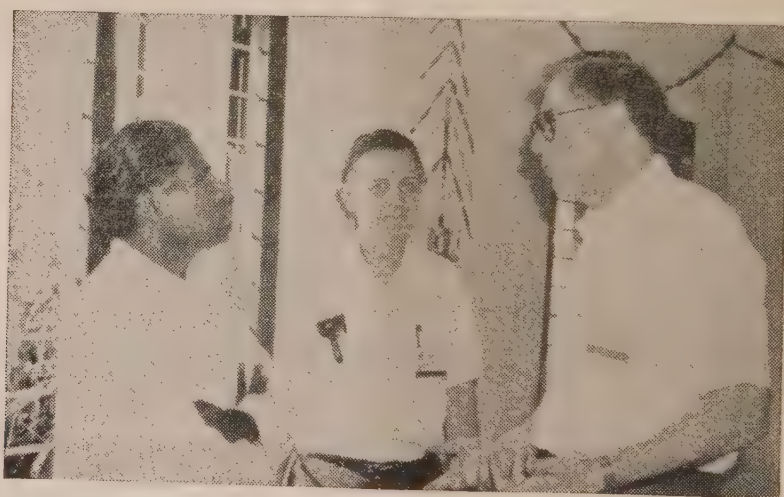


THE 20th SYNOD — PHOTO FEATURE

By
THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT



Moderator and Deputy Moderator being mutually honoured



The General Secretary exchanging views with the overseas delegates



Mr. K. J. Victor David, B.Com., F.C.A. the new Treasurer being welcomed by the Moderator

books for Bible study were published. They are the 'Church, Ministry and Sacraments' (based on Lima Document) and 'Mission in the Holy Spirit' (based on the theme of the last Synod), to be used at the monthly meetings of clergy. Further, several inter-diocesan Pastors' conferences were also held and topics such as 'Disarmament', 'Pastoral Counselling to the Dying and Bereaved', 'Pastor and Prayer Life' were chosen for reflection.

The CSI has involved itself in the social and political transformation of our country. The various ministries under the Council for Technical and Vocational Training, Church of South India Council for Child care, and Church's Auxiliary for Social Action are well received by the public and the Nation. We try to work hand in hand with the welfare programmes of the State and Central Governments. Two of our members are elected to the Indian Parliament under the Congress (I) ticket and several of our lay leaders are serving in State Assemblies, City Corporations, Municipalities and Panchayats. During the national calamities and conflicts we have played our humble role in serving the affected people and in bringing about peace. We have also given our contribution in looking after the refugees from Sri Lanka. We co-operate with like-minded people, groups and organisations in such needs of our neighbours.

Ecumenical Relations

Representing the C.S.I., I had the privilege of attending the biennial meeting of the Council for World Mission (CWM) and its Executives, Anglican Consultative Council and the meeting of the Central Committee of the WCC during this period. Further I had the opportunity to participate in the Synod of the Basel Mission at Basel, to meet the leaders of the Scottish Church in Edinburgh and to visit churches in a few Latin American countries. Such participation has greatly enhanced our fraternal relationship with other Churches and Ecumenical Bodies.

Our leaders who have been given the opportunity to service in various Commissions of the WCC and CWM have also contributed much for the building up of the World Church (Rt. Rev. Dr. P. Victor Premasagar—Faith and Order; Rt. Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar—Programme to Combat Racism; Dr. K. C. Abraham—Commission on Church's participation in Development; Mrs. Hari John—Christian Medical Commission; Mrs. Aruna Gnanadasan—Women in Church and Society; Dr. Christopher Duraisingh, General Secretary, CWM). The Deputy Moderator, General Secretary and some Bishops who had the opportunity to visit Churches and related Mission Boards also have contributed to enhance our contact with Churches outside.

We had the privilege of receiving many important visitors from abroad. Most of our related mission representatives attended two special Consultations which enabled us to exchange our views on several issues (1984 at Bangalore on the theme: 'Rethinking of our institutional Ministry', 1985 at Kodaikanal on the theme 'Whom do we serve in Mission').

In January 1985, a Chinese delegation of Church leaders visited the CSI in response to our invitation, and this has opened up a new door for our communication with the Church in the main land of China. Further we have been able to deepen our relationship with some of the Asian and African Churches during the past two years.

I am happy to report that under the Exchange programme, two teams of women visited West Germany in response to the invitation received from E.M.S. Women's Desk. We have also sent three couples to Australia under the Exchange Programme with CSI-UCA.

We are sorry to report that the CSI-CNI-Mar Thoma Joint Council was not able to make any progress either in adopting on a name, or in organising any common programme. We need to re-set our goals so that our journey together may be worthwhile and productive.

The Church of England has not so far established full communion with the CSI, while most of the other Anglican Provinces did. This is on the ground that even after the 30 year period the CSI has extended the policy of having in it non-episcopally ordained ministers from other related Church bodies. This needs further thinking. While this being so, as a consequence of our discussions at the Anglican Consultative Council, the Lambeth Palace has now come forward to invite the Moderator to the Primates' meeting of the Anglican Communion and 5 or 6 Bishops of the CSI to participate in the Lambeth Conference in July 1988. This is a glad and encouraging news.

We look forward to the great events of the Papal visit and the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury in February 1986. The visits of these heads of Churches, we hope, will further strengthen the ecumenical relationship in the country and usher in a new era in our relationship with the followers of other religions. A special conference of all the Bishops of Protestant, Mar Thoma and Orthodox Churches is being arranged in New Delhi in connection with the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the last week of February. We join with others in welcoming these heads of Churches to our country.

We have decided to establish a separate Department on Ecumenical Relations with a full-time Director to initiate and co-ordinate ecumenical programmes, union negotiations and to promote fraternal relationship with other Church bodies. Activities such as exchange visits, team visits, sending and receiving fraternal workers etc., will be handled by this Department.

A Few Observations

I would like to conclude my address with a few reflections that came out of my experience as Moderator for the last two terms.

Our church has a unique character, having people of different cultural, social as well as denominational backgrounds, brought together by the Gospel of reconciliation as one people and to bear common witness to that one humanity for which Christ died. The problems and tensions that may arise out of such growing-together need to be overcome by the same Spirit who has brought us together as members of Christ's Body. We need not be too much worried about the uncharitable criticisms levelled against us on account of inner tensions—of course, we do welcome any creative criticism—because we know only too well that how hard it is to overcome fully the brokenness thrust upon us for more than two thousand years and which is woven into the very fabric of our social structure and mental make up and has come to be reinforced generation after generation by customs, traditions and sacred laws. Though hard, by the power and grace of God and with determination we struggle till the glory breaks before us through the open gate of the City of God.

On several occasions we have noticed that people give undue importance to democracy, often in a wrong sense and also to the rights of individual undermining the wholeness of Christian fellowship. Many a time one notices power-politics, group conflicts and vested interests thriving under the label of democracy. Such tensions occasionally push people to approach civil courts under the pretext of fighting for justice. The Synod has to play its constitutional administrative role with regard to dioceses and its boards and councils. In recent years we have had the sad experience of our own Synod council members and members of boards and diocesan committees dragging the Synod to the civil courts. They do it while enjoying all the privileges our constitution offers. The Church has to take serious note of such unhelpful trends and educate people to see the difference between Western form of democracy and Christian koinonia and enable them to attain spiritual maturity in this regard as St. Paul admonishes the Corinthian Church. Bonhoeffer noted years ago that 'Whenever Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die'. Participation in the Christian community is a response to that call, for, it means a sacrifice of one's self, one's needs, wants and desires in order that something new and more glorious might be born' (*Bishop of Colorado—The Spirit and Community-Bishop's Move—p. 97*).

It is our hope that all our congregations will become healing, caring and sharing communities. Though we are trying to get over the self-seeking attitude of the earlier periods, we are not satisfied with the speed with which this transformation takes place. Educational programmes for children, lay people and pastors should earnestly deal with this problem. It is our fervent hope that within the next five to ten years many of our well-placed congregations would launch at least one good service programme of their own for the community around them. We also have to build up an awareness among able dioceses to participate in the needs of weaker ones.

In general, we need to go a long way in providing opportunities for women and youth to participate in the life and government of the Church. Our committees and conferences are over-dominated by men. Youth too, get very little encouragement to participate in the administration of the Church. These need special attention. Though we have a few women Presbyters, many dioceses need persuasion in this direction.

We have to get more experience in managing our affairs as a team. From the congregation level to the Synod level, our leaders, both clergy and lay, should learn to work together for the welfare of the church and its mission. There is always the temptation to dominate which brings very often break down in the administration. Dioceses should learn to respect the decision of higher bodies and thus to build up mutual trust. Diocesan administration and Synod administrative bodies should work together to solve problems facing the dioceses. Those dioceses which try to by-pass the Synod or manoeuvre Synod's decisions, continue to struggle with their problems as though no helping hand is available. This is indeed very sad. Internal peace and mutual trust among all sections of people are the basic requirements for growth and development.

The UNO has announced 1986 as the Year of Peace. As a people committed to peace and justice this announcement comes as a repeated call to our Church to girdle our

loins to fight for peace and communal harmony in our Nation and justice for the oppressed. In this context, the justice denied to the Christians of Scheduled Caste origin by our secular Government need our immediate attention and action.

We all need to seek the will of God for His Church and recheck our attachment to Jesus Christ, His son and our Saviour. 'The Kingdom is the reign of Jesus Christ, it does not belong to us. When we grasp some kind of a kingdom of our own we are in effect disinherited, because we cannot produce the fruits of His Kingdom. These can only be produced if we are dependent on Him as branches depend on a vine. If we strive for a kingdom with our own specifications, we will certainly have our reward. We may get what we have striven for; whether this is a sacramental system, a charismatic movement, more efficient Church Government, or the political solution to which we are dedicated, but we are likely to find ourselves strangely in kingdom that is not Christ's. We are to seek in obedience the mind of the living God. Woe to us if we try to possess God's vineyard and use His Church to advance the cause of our own kingdoms' (*Archbishop of Cape Town-Spirit and Social Action-Bishop's Move—p. 57*).

The Theme

The theme chosen for this Synod is 'Mission in Christ's Way' with the Biblical text 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. Though this theme was originally chosen by the World Mission and Evangelism unit of the WCC for its study, we have adopted the theme to reflect upon it in the Indian context. With great expectation our Nation looks forward to the 21st Century. Indian scene at the moment is not so bright. Per capita income of our country is calculated to be Rs. 500. This is 20 times less than what is normal in a developed country. This situation coupled with the gap between the rich and the poor in the country bring unimaginable sufferings caused by poverty and malnutrition on millions of our people. Illiteracy is on the increase according to statistics. Population of the country doubles at every 30 year period. 60% of our population consists of women and children who suffer most under such situations. Moral degeneration is seen in every walk of life.

Christians in India are only 2½% of the total population. Various activities of the Churches come under public debate every now and then. Occasionally some people point out the foreignness of Christianity. Such socio-economic contest, pluralistic religious setting, multi-cultural background and the minority situation, in a sense, will make our study on the theme unique.

According to Biblical witness, mission precedes vision. Vision that draws us to the reality of the living God that recreates our life, that opens our mind to God's purposes and that touches our hearts to respond to God's call for mission. On the Easter Day the risen Lord appeared to His disciples, showed His wounded body and said to them: 'As Father has sent me even so I send you'. This vision continues to inspire us in many different ways with ever fresh insights. Let such a vision lead us to make deep commitments to engage in the mission of our Lord even submitting to undergo sufferings for His sake and His people. Then the prayer 'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' will become our life.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

CSI SYNOD—1986

REV. M. AZARIAH

While reviewing the Life and Work of our great Church during the past biennium from the perspective of the Policies and Programmes initiated by the Synod, it would be appropriate to attempt a stock taking in terms of the Theme for this 20th Session of the Synod, namely, 'MISSION IN CHRIST WAY'. So then we must ask the question how far the various activities of this our Pilgrim Church marched on the way of Christ's Mission. The same question may also have been raised while reporting on the life and work of our pastorates and dioceses for the past biennium since the whole Church had already given top priority for Evangelism and work of the Mission following the consultations both at the Diocesan and Synod levels during the year 1981 on the priorities for the Mission of the Church.

The General Secretary's report to the last Session of the Synod at Secunderabad had used three phrases to characterise the life and movement of our Church. Describing as '*A Church on the move*' the progressive policies and programmes of the whole Church during the last biennium were highlighted. Under the title '*Church as the Father's house*' the nature and function of our Church and the dominant image it presented to all those who were coming into this household of God, particularly those from the socially oppressed people in this country since the time of our Missionary fathers has been recalled and re-affirmed. Seeking a vision for the future of our Church based upon the trends and potentialities, that report hoped for the conscious efforts on the part of our congregations and dioceses to move towards becoming '*The Church of the Poor*'. It was this last insight that was authenticated from the experience of the Chinese Churches. Bishop Ting who visited our Church in January 1985 with a team of 10 Christian leaders had asserted, 'only if we become the Church of the poor masses can we become a Church for the future'.

Response to Ethnic riots in Sri Lanka

Following the August 1983 riots affecting vast number of Tamils including in our Jaffna diocese, the Synod took action in consultation with Bishop Ambalavanar and others to express our solidarity with the suffering people there including by making available Rs. 50,000 for Emergency Relief and supported other initiatives for providing housing for Refugees within Jaffna and providing self-employment training and other helps to the refugees coming into India through the Synod Council for Technical and Vocational Training and the Dioceses of Trichy-Tanjore and Madurai-Ramnad.

Response to other socio-political and economic situations

During the Punjab riots and military action within the Golden Temple our Church sent a contribution to the CNI Bishop in Amritsar to render relief to the victims in response to the WCC appeal, our Church had also sent a contribution for famine victims in Ethiopia.

Missionary to Tamilnad

Responding to the request from the Church of Christ and The Lamp of Thailand Correspondence Course programme initiated by the late Rev. Paul Manickam, the Synod was able to send back Mrs. Mano Manickam for a period of 3 years as our Missionary supported by the CWM in Thailand.

Synod Councils and Departments

During this biennium this Synod took further initiatives by appointing Directors to these Synod Councils:

- (a) Dr. George Joseph—September '84—Synod Council for Healing Ministry.
- (b) Rev. Retnadas—March '85—Synod Council for Mission and Evangelism.
- (c) Dr. Saulam Yohan—July '85—Synod Council for Education.

These appointments enabled the Synod level Councils to begin their work of co-ordinating and supporting their respective areas of work in the Dioceses. Through Seminars and Consultations these Councils have started a process of self-evaluation of the respective ministries in the whole Church. The formation of these Councils following the pattern of the Council for Technical and Vocational Training were first mooted at the 1981 Priorities Consultation. It was envisaged that they should function as part of the Synod level structure but not attached to any particular region or diocese in our Church nor as an independent organ loosely linked to the Synod. However, the experience during the biennium would seem to call for clearly defined structural relationship of these Councils and also Departments with the Synod Secretariat in order to ensure the integrating role of the Synod. We now have 4 Synod Councils and 2 Synod Departments besides the CSITA linked with the Synod Treasury. During the biennium an urgent need was felt for an Ecumenical Relations Department and the

proposals for launching the same has already been approved by the Synod and we hope a new Director for the same will soon be appointed. This Department will handle not only the Union Negotiations with other Churches in India but also promote our relations through Exchange of Personnel and other Ecumenical means with our overseas Church partners and Ecumenical Organisations. The 4 Councils and 2 Departments operating as instruments of the whole Church have already shown a great potential as could be seen from their reports for the past biennium for creating the needed ferment in our dioceses for renewal of our total Mission.

Therefore I am confident the new trend since 1980 in creating Synod level Councils and Departments is in the right direction and should not be misconstrued as centralisation which may affect the autonomy of the dioceses. A Church on the move must necessarily shake off its 'status-quo' approach even if that had been sanctified by 38 long years when we had no such departments with the Synod.

Rural Development Education Programme

Under the *Relief & Development Committee* of the Synod a new programme called '*Comprehensive Rural Development Education Programme*' was started with a Co-ordinator at the Synod level during this biennium. This programme is a response to the social reality of our rural illiterate masses who are in urgent need of conscientization or awareness-building that will open up self-understanding and lead them to gain self-dignity and self-reliance. The Synod approved this as an experimental Pilot Project which would be implemented in two Rural Pastorates from each of our Dioceses with Rural Development Educators also drawn from the chosen pastorates so that the Educator could sit where his people sit for his conscientising activity. 18 of our Dioceses have joined this programme and we have 36 young people, two of them women, employed for two years under this scheme. This significant programme of people development is recognised as such and supported both by the CASA, Delhi and in a bit way by EZE, Bonn and other partners.

Consultations with the CSI-RMC Partners

During the biennium under review two Consultations were held between the Working Committee members of the Synod and the representatives of the Related Missions Committees in London and in New York. On 6th April 1984, the one-day Consultation had the theme 'Rethinking our Institutional Ministries' and for the next year, we had a two-day Consultation in Kodaikanal discussing the theme, 'Whom do we serve in Mission?' Both the Consultations were well represented by our partners and searching questions were being faced at these meetings. As the themes themselves suggested, issues for mutual partnership in Mission were discerned and debated as they vitally affected the identified priorities of the Mission of our Church and the pattern of funding extended by our overseas partners. At these meetings another vital issue discussed was on the matter of Exchange of Personnel between our Churches not only because of Visa problems for receiving overseas missionaries to work in India but also because of the new understanding about 'Christian Mission in all the six continents'.

I certainly want to take this opportunity to express the gratitude of the Synod and praise God for the deep

relationships with and for generous support extended by our RMC partners and Donor Agencies in our effort in fulfilling the Mission of the Church. Specifically, we need to mention our partners, namely, MCOD, London; EMS (West Germany) which includes our prominent friends like Basel Mission Kurhessen Waldeck Church in Kassel and the Württemberg Church around Stuttgart; the Church of Scotland; CWM, London; URC in the UK, Reformed Church in the Netherlands, both of whom are our fellow members in the CWM family; USPC, London; The Uniting Church of Australia; UCBWM, New York, within which we have our friends of Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ; the Presbyterian Church in America; the Reformed Church in America and also the Asia desk of the NCCC-USA and the Anglican Church of Canada. Nor can we forget the generous and sustained support given to our Development Projects by the EZE, Bonn, Bread for the World, Stuttgart; ICCO, Amsterdam; Christian Aid, London; ADB, Holland. During the past two years we had the privilege of welcoming over 40 visitors with our Synod and our Dioceses representing all these partners listed above besides also from the WCC, Geneva and the CCA, Singapore.

Exchange Visitors Programme

Team Exchange Visits between the CSI and UCA, between URC and CSI and between the EMS and the CSI have become a regular feature developing with definite goals and purposes building upon our year to year experiences in implementing them. During 1986 The Reformed Church in the Netherlands is also wanting to join this scheme. This experience opened up the way for another pattern of Exchange Visits with our partner Churches overseas for Experience Exposure of our Church members. Rather than these visits being between our Church and our Western partners, the emerging new pattern that is encouraged in some cases with funds, is the Exchange Visitors Programme between the CSI and partner Churches in Asia and in Africa. Under these new arrangements, during last year it was possible for one of our pastors from the Rayalaseema diocese to visit for 3 months with one of the African Independent Churches in Zimbabwe and a lay-man from Madras diocese spend 3 months including for studies in Communications with the Nairobi based Anglican Church in Kenya. Another pastor from the Trichy-Tanjore diocese will be visiting with the Church of Christ in Japan for 3 months in the coming year. Two other persons from our Church are invited by the Presbyterian Church in South Korea and Church of Christ in Thailand for a similar Exposure Experience for 3 months perhaps one each from Kerala and Karnataka. We are fortunate to have Bishop Mutendi and Rev. Chifamba from Zimbabwe in Southern Africa attending our Synod hopefully and visiting with some of our Diocese. I want to place on record our grateful thanks to the CWM London for their contribution and especially to Mr. Sam Isaac of the WCC Desk on Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel for all his help, wise counsel and co-operation for this programme.

Church's concern for the oppressed people (Dalits)

The 19th Session of the Synod at Secunderabad directed the Church by a Resolution calling for setting up a Synod Commission for Study and Action on Caste Issues to pursue its concern for the Dalits both within and outside

the Church. This was implemented when the Executive Committee at Secunderabad constituted a seven-member commission with the Deputy Moderator as its Chairman. This Committee had met and arranged for some literature for being published to create awareness among the Dalit people in our four regions. Already such literature is being published in Telugu language through our Communications Director, Rev. Dass Babu. On the recommendation of this Commission the Synod Working Committee has instituted a special Scholarship Fund at the Synod level for Christians of Scheduled Caste origin to help with higher and specialised Education like for Medical and Engineering courses for selected candidates from the CSCO. Other actions taken up by this Commission during the biennium includes support marches and presentation of memoranda to the Government authorities on behalf of the CSCO who are deprived of the reservations and other handicapped benefits available to their fellow oppressed people called Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes. These initiatives in support of the so-called Harijans and other weaker sections in India, are unprecedented in the history of our Church which had only been able to pass Resolution on these issues from time to time. I want to take this opportunity to appeal to all the honourable members of the Synod to pay special attention to these Dalit people in our midst, not because we want to support any particular community but because Mission in Christ's way demands that every Church and every Christian to focus on the 'least of the people' whom Jesus called as His blood brothers and sisters in His parable of the Last Judgement (Matt. 25 : 31-46). In our country of 800 millions where some 50% are living below the poverty line, we have more than 400 million poor people. Gospel to the Poor (Luke 4 : 18-21) demands that we also give preference to the poor making definite options in our Mission expressing solidarity with the poor by 'siding with the poor'. But then, in all of India, Christians are not even 30 millions and how are we going to be in solidarity with 400 millions of poor people in this country? Obviously, 'we have to focus on the Poorest of the Poor' among these 400 millions and we must identify those whom Jesus would describe as 'the least people'. These people are not only economically hungry but are also deprived of their basic human rights to drinking water; not only physically deprived of clothes but psychologically deprived and devoid of self-respect and dignity. Not only they are strangers as migrant labourer but are made refugees and strangers in their own land, deprived of their lands, properties or opportunities for employment, etc. Not only they are physically sick but also rendered completely dependent on others for survival. Not only these people are thrown into jails but caught up in the cultural social and even spiritual bondages of the demonic forces and 'powers and authorities' in this evil world. Using these above criteria for identifying the least people in our country, will it be wrong to conclude that all the above described deprivations exactly fit the real condition of over 200 million people known in this country as the Harijans and Girjans, the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, then we have about 100 million disabled people including some 3 million leprosy sufferers. Of course we cannot ignore the plight of the women in our country, particularly the illiterate and poverty stricken village women in their teeming millions for whom special attention needs to be paid through our Church's ministries. Indeed, Mission in Christ's way should focus precisely on all these any genuine powerless and vulnerable people who are 'like sheep without a Shepherd' (Mark 6 : 34) dehumanised, directionless and leaderless as the compassionate Jesus of Nazareth had identified in the rural Galilean people in His day.

The Constitutional Role of the Synod

During the 2 years under review, the Constitutional Role of the Synod had come under severe strain. Injunctions and Stay Orders against the Resolutions of the Synod Executive Committee and Working Committee had been brought from 4 different dioceses, particularly restraining the Synod Officers from implementing those Resolutions. The initiatives of the Synod in the interest of better administration and management of the affairs of the Dioceses were misconstrued as interference. Vested interests encouraged a few disgruntled elements to rush to courts not only against the Synod but against other parties within the Dioceses. It is in this context, the Executive Committee considered the possibility of reducing the court case and settling the disputes through Arbitration within the 4 walls of our Church. It is found that the Indian Arbitration Act of 1960 provides the needed secular cover that could drastically change the tendency for litigant minded people if provisions in our Constitution for Arbitration could be provided. Hence this session of the Synod is being approached to support the Constitutional Amendment proposal for setting up Arbitration Procedures through a Chapter on settlements of disputes. May I therefore appeal to the honourable members of the Synod to give your careful consideration and pass this Amendment unanimously. 'If one of you have a dispute with a fellow Christian, how dare you go before heathen judges instead of letting God's people settle the matter?' —asks St. Paul (Read I Corinthians 6 : 1-11). Should we not obey God's word, rather than yield to our human passions and ambitions?

Another Constitutional issue that calls for urgent consideration relates to the matter of the integrating role with adequate powers of the Synod on the one hand and the necessary autonomy of the Dioceses for deeper growth in fellowship and local witness on the other. Observers have felt that the present image of the CSI is rather like a federation of 21 autonomous dioceses than one organically united Church. Such a structure must have been necessary for the earlier stages of denominational union. But, after 38 years of growth into organic union there is definite need to change gear and march towards deeper integration within our Church. It must be noted the CNI its inauguration in 1970 had learnt this lesson from the CSI experience thus making its Constitution to ensure deeper organic unity within that Church.

Unity in the Church

One of the paragraphs describing the purpose and nature of the Union in the Governing Principles of our Church says, 'The Church of South India acknowledges that, in every effort to bring together divided members of Christ's Body into one organization, the final aim must be the union in the Universal Church of all who acknowledge the name of Christ and that the test of all local schemes of union is that they should express locally the principle of the great Catholic unity of the Body of Christ'. We certainly have much to thank God that the CSI has gone a long way towards fulfilling the above resolve of our founding fathers. The constituent denominations that were divided members of Christ's Body before the union in 1947, were the Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. They had merged into one organization not only giving up their age old traditions and specificity of theological and cultural expressions but also gained from their mutual experiences and expressions. The Book of Common Worship which gives

concrete shape to such mutuality is now being used in almost 90% of our 12,000 odd congregations both in urban and rural areas. Ironically, only in certain elitist and educated urban congregations less enlightened stubbornness seems to persist in this regard. Certain non-doctrinal and non-denominational factors that characterised the 'scandal of division' of the Body of Christ such as the barriers of language, caste, economic status etc., have markedly receded though not faded away, particularly when we compare it with the situation outside the Church. Again ironically, it is among certain sections of the educated, elitist, urban congregations and Christians such unchristian attitudes seem to linger and are sometimes even subtly being furthered. However, considering the fact that between 1919 and 1947, the Union Negotiations passed through an 'incubation period' of 30 years and comparing the process of merging into organic union during the next thirty years since inauguration, we can only praise God that we are well on the way to integration having begun also the second phase in terms of inner unity and fellowship in the Spirit among the members of the Church. Even the fact that the 19th Synod took up as its theme 'In the fellowship of the Spirit' is sufficient evidence of the direction into which the Church is intending to move.

Apart from the resolve in our Constitution for Unity within the Church, it also looks further beyond, declaring, 'the final aim must be the union in the Universal Church of all who acknowledge the name of Christ'. During the past 38 years this above concern has also been taken up by our Church when it entered into union negotiations with the Lutherans, the baptists and more recently with the CNI and Mar Thoma Church. More for non-theological reasons the talks with the Baptists and more recently with the CNI and Mar Thoma Church. More for non-theological reasons the talks with the Baptists and the Lutherans have ended in a stalemate even though just this past year the Synod Executive Committee had resolved to reopen conversations with the Lutherans as well as with the erstwhile American Methodists in South India. But the concept of 'conciliarity' which one of our leaders Bishop Leslie Newbigin was involved in formulating at Louvain in 1971, in the meeting of the WCC Commission on Faith and Order had been the basis of the present Joint Council of the CSI-CNI and Mar Thoma Church that is in vogue for the past 7 years. In his autobiography, 'Unfinished Agenda' Bishop Newbigin refers on page 233 of his fears about the concept of 'conciliarity' saying, 'I was sure that "conciliarity" would be seized upon as an alternative to Organic Union and therefore welcomed by those who wanted at all costs preserve denominational identities.' Most unfortunately it seems that Bishop Newbigin's fears have come true in the case of the Joint Council where the Mar Thoma Church in particular is known to insist on preserving its identity.

Mar Thoma Church decided not to accept the common name proposed by us as 'Church of India' but had instead proposed the name to be 'Council of Churches in Communion—CSI-CNI-MTC'. It is in this context that our Executive Committee had to make the crucial decision to request the Joint Council to reduce its membership from 90 to 15 thus converting the Council into a Union Negotiations Committee. This matter is coming before this Synod for further discussion and guidance from the honourable members.

The Theological Commission of our Church had done an excellent job in the matter of Reception Process for the WCC sponsored BEM document and produced a

statement which is well received by the WCC Faith and Order Commission. We praise God for such contribution from our Church to the global Ecumenical Movement.

Church Government

The Basis of Union in our Constitution refers to the view about the 'Episcopacy' as 'a form of Church Government which has persisted in the Church through centuries and may as such be called historic and which at the present time is expedient for the Church in South India' as the most prevalent view that linked the Episcopacy and Church Government'. However, the Basis of Union also speaks of 'the relation of the Bishop to his people should be that of a chief pastor and father in God; and that he is called to feed the flock of God taking the oversight thereof as Shepeherd, not as Lord, either in the act or title, but as an example to the flock'. Seen in the light of such a vision for the Church Government that had prevailed during the past 38 years, was certainly have much to thank God for. However, it is also true such great leaders like Bishop Newbigin has had the humility and the courage to point to the major temptations to any Bishop in his autobiography on page 237 saying, 'I knew that my ministry had been marred by many serious faults by moments of anger and bad temper, by a too dominating style of leadership and by failure to be as fully available for others as a Bishop should be'. But then, we have at the other end of the spectrum, the over emphasis on Democracy by the lay people in certain sections of the Church that have frequently marred the Ministry of the Church Government often leading to Court cases before the Civil and Secular authorities. However, it is a consoling fact that only a few of our 21 Dioceses would appear to be involved in court cases at present. And yet, even the fact in the early Church at Corinth also there was a strong tendency to resort to Civil Courts by the Christian brothers cannot be used to justify any litigant spirit within the membership and fellowship of the CSI.

Renewal in the Church

Renewal in any Church is necessarily linked to renewal in Mission practice in the same Church. And, Mission practice of course needs to be constantly reviewed and contextualised by fresh thinking which may also be in response to the contemporary challenges.

Some 20 years ago when Dr. Heideman of RCA was heading up the famous Bible Correspondence Course Programme from Vellore, he characterised the Evangelistic practice in the Indian Church as being primarily one off hit-and-run approach in the John the Baptist style of proclamation. That situation today had not changed very much will be readily conceded. And yet, a notable change seemed to have come in terms of involvement in social action as the other side of the coin with Evangelism. Even so, we still seem to be concerned with the primary forms of Mission through what I would call the *three Es*, namely, Evangelism, Education, and healing as three dimensions of our Church's mission. But, Mission in Christ's way challenges us to go beyond these *three Es* approach into deeper commitment to the incarnation, the Crucifixion and Resurrection modes of Mission of Jesus of Nazareth who came into this world with a 'Spirit of God upon Him' (Luke. 4 : 18 ; John 20 : 19 ff.).

Challenges for our Mission practice today also comes from more than fifty Para Church Missionary Agencies

like, Friends Missionary Prayer Band, Indian Evangelical Mission, etc. most of them supported by our own Church members on the one hand and also from over 200 Social Action Groups, most of them led by Church members on the other. There seems to be a parallel existence by the Church with these streams of Mission with uneasy truce rather than conscious efforts at coming together to grapple with the deeper implications for Christian mission in our land.

A third kind of challenge to the Mission practice in the Indian Church should arise from the most recent event that took place in Madras called, 'A Pilgrimage of Trust on Earth' from December 27, 1985 to January 1, 1986 with the participation of over 10,000 young people from around the world that was organised by the Brothers of the TAIZE community in France. Even the single fact that, during, before and after this event the Brothers of TAIZE including their leader Brother Roger, lived in a simple house in the midst of a slum, mingling and living with the poorest section of our Society in terms of witness through Christian presence sharing in the sufferings and struggles of the 'least' people or the bottom most rung of the social ladder in itself must be a great challenge to our methods of easy-going Evangelism. Here we have a unique example of Incarnational Mission in Christ's way that engages in genuine Ministry of reconciliation (II. Corinthians. 5 : 17 ff.).

The foregoing reference to certain challenges to our Church will have to be taken seriously and there is first of all a great need for Theological reflection within our Church. In fact, even after 38 years our Church is not able to boast of any Theology of our own in this large Church, neither in the field of Ecumenism nor in the area of Mission. I very much hope that not only more

than 1200 Theology trained leaders but all these thinking lay persons in our Church will give serious thought to this matter in order to look for renewal in the whole Church.

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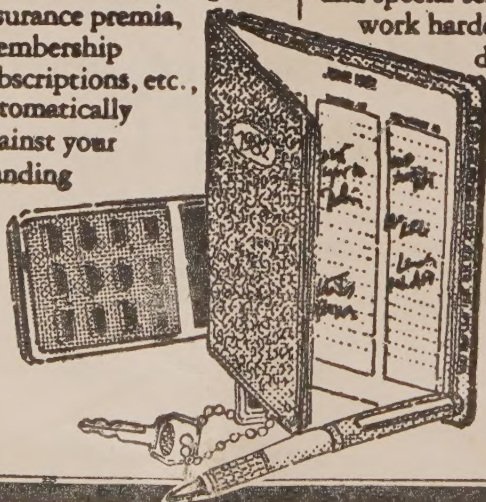
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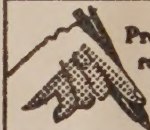
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